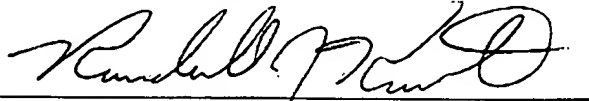


if the Examiner has any questions or comments that would speed prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at 260/485-6001.

Respectfully submitted,



Randall J. Knuth
Registration No. 34,644

RJK/jrw

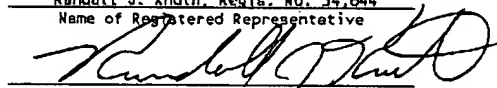
Encs: Replacement Claims
Marked-up Claims

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited via facsimile with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to: 703/305-6078, on: February 24, 2003.

Randall J. Knuth, Regis. No. 34,644
Name of Registered Representative



Signature
February 24, 2003
Date

REPLACEMENT CLAIMS

Please delete claims 1-14, 16, and 21-23 without prejudice.

MARKED-UP CLAIMS

Please delete claims 1-14 without prejudice.

15. A welded product produced using the welding method in accordance with Claim 1.

Please delete claim 16 without prejudice.

17. A welded product, produced in accordance with the welding method of Claim 16.

18. A welding product produced using the welding method in accordance with Claim 9.

19. A welding product produced using the welding method in accordance with Claim 10.

20. A welding product produced using the welding method in accordance with Claim 14.

Please delete claims 21-23 without prejudice.

24. A welded product, produced in accordance with the welding method of Claim 21.

25. A welded product, produced in accordance with the welding method of Claim 22.

26. A welded product, produced in accordance with the welding method of Claim 23.